

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 19 MAY 2010

**REPORT ON: HMIe AND CARE COMMISSION INTEGRATED INSPECTION OF
LONGHAUGH NURSERY SCHOOL**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 243- 2010

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and the Care Commission following an integrated inspection at Longhaugh Nursery School.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- i) notes the contents of this report; and
- ii) instructs the Director of Education to monitor progress towards meeting the areas for improvement contained in the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Longhaugh Nursery School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) and the Care Commission in February 2010. They published a report on their findings in March 2010. At the time of the inspection 105 children aged between three and five years were being offered a service on both a part-time and full day basis.

4.2 The inspectorate identified the following strengths of the nursery:

- Motivated children who are excited about learning.
- The welcoming, caring and supportive learning environment.
- Staff interaction in supporting children's learning.

4.3 The following areas for improvement were agreed with the nursery school and education authority:

- The head teacher and staff need to work more effectively as a team.
- Further develop curriculum links with associated primary schools.
- Make self evaluation more rigorous and systematic to ensure that the quality of children's learning continues to improve.

4.4 Quality Indicators

4.4.1 HMIE reports using a six-point scale for reporting performance:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

4.4.2 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Grading
Improvements in performance	Good
Children's experiences	Good
Meeting learning needs	Good
The curriculum	Good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Satisfactory

4.5 Longhaugh Nursery School's School Improvement Plan (2010 - 2012) includes a focus on the identified areas for improvement. These will be regularly reviewed, monitored and evaluated in line with both the school and the authority quality improvement calendars.

4.6 HMIE have indicated that they are confident that the nursery school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result they will make no further visits to Longhaugh Nursery School in connection with this inspection. The nursery school and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2 There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Director of Finance.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 The following Background Papers were relied upon in preparation of this Report:

- A Report my HM Inspectorate of Education and the Care Commission: Inspection of pre-school provision. Longhaugh Nursery School, Dundee City Council - 31 March 2010

JIM COLLINS
Director of Education

29 APRIL 2010

**Longhaugh Nursery
Dundee City Council**

31 March 2010

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

Contents

- [1. The centre](#)
- [2. Particular strengths of the centre](#)
- [3. How well do children learn and achieve?](#)
- [4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?](#)
- [5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?](#)
- [6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?](#)
- [7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?](#)
- [8. What happens next?](#)

1. The centre

Longhaugh Nursery was inspected in February 2010 by HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged three to five years. It is registered for 70 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 105 at the time of the inspection. There are 15 children receiving full time provision.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Motivated children who are excited about learning.
- The welcoming, caring and supportive learning environment.
- Staff interaction in supporting children's learning.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children are motivated and excited about their learning. They approach their chosen activities enthusiastically and confidently. Children interact well with each other and are good at turn taking and sharing. Children are developing their skills in using a range of technology to support their learning. They make effective use of programmable toys, video camera and computer. Children are aware of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle and readily discuss this with adults. They are also aware of the importance of looking after wildlife in the garden. Children are developing their investigative skills through early science and exploration of the natural world. Children express themselves successfully through different types of play, music and drama.

Children are making good progress in their learning and development. They listen to and can carry out simple instructions effectively. Children talk very well with each other and adults about their chosen tasks. Almost all talk confidently when sharing information about what they have learned. Children have a good understanding of early rhyming and are competent in predicting sounds and words. Almost all children can identify their name in print and a few sounds within it. The majority of children are attempting to read simple words and are very aware of print in the environment. Almost all children have a good understanding that mark making and writing have a purpose. A few children are very confident and successful in developing their early writing skills. They can write captions about what they have been doing. Children confidently match by colour, shape, texture and size. They have a good awareness and understanding of early number. The majority of children can identify and record numbers up to ten. A few children have a good understanding of number up to twenty. When playing games they use their knowledge of number well. The majority of children use early mathematical language appropriately and confidently in play situations.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide a curriculum which is firmly based on play, active learning and enjoyment. They have made a good start to reviewing the curriculum, taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*. The curriculum ensures that children take part in a range of stimulating learning experiences, for example making scenery and props to use when acting out well known stories and videoing their performances. Children are at the early stages of planning and developing their learning. They have begun to use mind-mapping strategies to plan activities around their favourite books. Children are able to develop their early literacy and numeracy skills well during play. There are good outdoor learning opportunities to support a number of areas of the curriculum effectively. This includes energetic play, role-play and investigative learning through early science and the exploration of the natural world. The structure of the curriculum

allows children to find out about different cultures and why they celebrate certain festivals. Creativity is encouraged and experienced through a range of quality activities in art and design and drama.

Staff support children in all areas of their learning and development by quality interaction and observing them during play. They now need to be more focused with their observations to ensure that they plan more effectively for what children will learn next. Children who require additional support to their learning are identified at an early stage and are well supported by staff. Parents appreciate the high level of support they and their children receive from staff.

4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Staff make good use of people within the local community to support children's learning. Children make use of the local library and there are good links with the community police. Staff work effectively with health visitors, speech and language therapist and social work to support children's needs. The nursery has begun to include children in fundraising activities for charity, for example children were involved in a 'pyjama day' to raise funds for Haiti earthquake relief. Staff have positive partnerships with parents. They are given opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and events in the nursery. The nursery has good links with associated primary schools which support children's transition to school very well. For example developing the use of *GLOW* by using interactive storylines which allows children to link with other nurseries and schools. More effective curricular links would support greater continuity in children's learning. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with complaints.

5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

Staff provide a welcoming, caring and supportive learning environment for children and their families. They are aware of identified areas within the improvement plan but do not always contribute fully towards its implementation. The headteacher and staff need to have a greater focus on working as a team to develop further the work of the nursery. Children are given opportunities to be involved in nursery developments, for example in revising the snack menu. Parents' views about the work of the nursery are taken into account when planning future developments.

6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

Staff provide a good level of care for children and appreciate their individual learning and development needs. They use praise and encouragement appropriately, making children feel valued and secure in their learning. Staff encourage children to develop a healthy lifestyle by looking after themselves and eating healthily. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff are familiar with procedures related to child protection.

7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The headteacher and staff need to have a shared understanding of identified developments within the nursery. They need to work more effectively as a team. With support from the local authority they can continue to improve provision for children's learning.

8. What happens next?

We are confident that, with support from the education authority, the centre will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The centre and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- The headteacher and staff need to work more effectively as a team.
- Further develop curriculum links with associated primary schools.
- Make self-evaluation more rigorous and systematic to ensure the quality of children's learning continues to improve.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there was one recommendation and one requirement. Both have since been addressed.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Longhaugh Nursery.

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	satisfactory

Managing Inspector: Gordon Buchanan
Care Commission Officer: Fiona Young
31 March 2010

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means outstanding, sector leading
very good	means major strengths
good	means important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means important weaknesses

unsatisfactory means major weaknesses

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Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600 236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

You can find our complaints procedure on our website www.hmie.gov.uk or alternatively you can contact our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

You can also contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

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Footnote

1. Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends